

AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER IN EGYPT, INCORPORATED

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COLLÈGE DE FRANCE
Cabinet d'Égyptologie

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It is with pleasure that we are able to include with our reports from Egypt a letter from Dr. Helen Wall-Jacquet, who held the Center's Egyptological fellowship in 1958-59. Dr. Jacquet writes from Lower Nubia, where she went from Luxor, after having spent some time in the latter place continuing the work described in Newsletter Thirty-Six, which she began last season under the auspices of the Center.

Letter from Dr. Helen Wall-Jacquet

Abu Simbel
February 29, 1960

Dear Members:

Since Nubia is at the moment so much in the limelight, it has seemed to me that you might be glad to hear about what is going on in the neighborhood of the southern borders of Egypt.

I left Luxor on February 1st to join my husband, who is working with the Egyptian Documentation Center at Abu Simbel. I originally intended to stay only a week, but life here has been so agreeable, and there is so much to do that I have already remained for a month. The expedition I have joined is housed in two boats moored in front of the great rock-temple. It includes photographers, architects, draftsmen, and egyptologists; among the last-named are Dr. Černý, who is making the final, corrected copies of all the rock stelae, and Dr. Piankoff and Dr. Christophe, who are working on the descriptions of the temples.

What with all the publicity Nubia is receiving from newspapers and magazines, we have a continuous stream of visitors. The "Express" boat from Shellal to Wadi Halfa brings groups of tourists twice a week. Enterprising persons, who want to examine the temples more thoroughly than is possible in the bare hour permitted to passengers on the "Express," come over an impossible trail by taxi from Wadi Halfa to the village opposite the temples and hire a sailboat to bring them across the river. Some rent a dahabiya at Assuan (there are only two available!) or even, in extremity, a felucca, in which to make the trip up-river; a few manage to secure cabins on the boat that brings the mail. Television and movie people are popping in all the time to get shots of the expedition at work, of the draftsmen sitting under magnificent beach-umbrellas on scaffolding supported by ropes, small pieces of wood, and the grace of God, trying to decipher signs on rock-stelae, which have been worn by wind and sand and pecked at by birds until they seem like little more than blurs. My husband has developed a routine for his camera act: he sets up his theodolite on the base of one of the colossi, peers through it with an intense expression, and then jots down lists of numbers. This makes a great hit with the photographers.



Our most illustrious visitor so far has been the Begum Agha Khan, who with two of her ladies stayed here for three days. She was enthusiastically received by the inhabitants of the region, who call her "our dear mother," and was invited to a number of festivals, in which we also were able to take part. Among these was a delightful wedding in the village to the south. We all went by boat to the house of the bride, where we were served with tea and cakes and dates and then were ushered to a platform in front of the house to witness a performance of dancing and singing. The men of the village were on one side of our dais, the women, on the other, and in between was an orchestra composed of a tarabouka (drum) and a rebaba (a sort of violin), whose music formed a continuous background rhythm for the performance. The performance began with a phrase called out by one of the men, which was answered by the women with the peculiar, shrill call that seems to be used indifferently on occasions of jubilation and of sorrow. From time to time, two of the women came into the center of the circle and danced very sedately, stepping slowly backward and forward, with graceful movements of their arms. They were veiled, of course, and their long black dresses trailed behind them. To the sound of Nubian songs, the moon rose over the eastern mountains, making a broad path of light across the Nile. It was a beautiful and impressive scene.

Only a few days ago a large boat chartered by the Egyptian Ministry of Culture arrived with about fifty journalists and representatives of sixteen countries, sent by UNESCO to learn something about the problems connected with the recording and safeguarding of Nubian monuments and to see what progress has been made to that end. In the group were the German and Belgian Ambassadors, Mr. Lovegrove, the Cultural Attache of the American Embassy, with Mrs. Lovegrove, John Ross, a former resident of Cairo, who came as special photographer for Time Magazine, the Assistant Press Attaché of the Russian Embassy, and many others. The group was in charge of Shehatta Adam, liaison officer for Dr. Sarwat Okasha, the Minister of Culture and National Guidance. They stayed here for a day and a half, taking photographs and interviewing members of the expedition, and then proceeded to Wadi Halfa, from where they intended to visit the excavations of Dr. Emery at Buhen.

Three other expeditions, in addition to that at Abu Simbel, are now at work in Nubia. Dr. Abu Bakr is excavating a large cemetery north of Aniba, which includes burials of the predynastic and Meroitic periods. He has found a large number of interesting objects, including a beautiful wooden box with ivory inlay of Bes figures and Hathor heads. Farther north, Dr. Stock of the German Archaeological Institute has resumed work at Amada, and Dr. Daumas, Director of the French Archaeological Institute, has begun operations at Wadi es-Sebua. In addition, Dr. Sève-Söderbergh has been sent by the King of Sweden on a trip of reconnaissance to determine possible sites for excavation, and M. Derchain has been in Nubia on a similar mission for the Belgian Government.

This should be a good time for American institutions to offer to work in Nubia. If they do so, they will have a good chance of obtaining concessions in Egypt proper later on. Even institutions of limited resources could handle small excavations or, even better, could join forces with expeditions already at work. For instance, Abu Bakr would probably welcome help in excavating the cemetery where he is now at work, for it stretches for four miles along the river, and it will be difficult for him to complete the work in the time and with the funds allotted to him.

I must say that in all this activity the Sudan is being rather neglected. The sites there are likely to prove more important than those of the Egyptian Sudan, but of course the excavation of them will not offer the reward of future concessions in Egypt. The expense of working in the Sudan is also considerable, for excavation there requires more equipment and larger personnel. The best solution to this problem lies in joint expeditions of two or more universities or museums, which would doubtless be rewarding to the participants.

In conclusion, there is now, after a long period of inactivity, no lack of opportunity for foreign excavation in Egypt and the Sudan. The great problem, as always, is to find financial support and suitable personnel.

Helen Wall-Jacquet

Problems of Repatriation

The human problems connected with the flooding of large areas in Nubia and the Sudan are frequently lost sight of in world-wide concern with the protection of monuments of the past. The Manchester Guardian Weekly, Vol. 82, No. 11, March 17, 1960, publishes on page 12 two articles, "The Antiquities of Nubia" and "Preserving the Threatened Relics," the first of which gives an idea of what the flooding of large areas will mean to around a hundred thousand human beings. While the new dam is undoubtedly for the greater good, it will create problems of resettlement, which will have to be solved before the Nubian and southern Sudanese Nile is turned into a vast lake. Avowedly, the area to be flooded is "much the poorest, much the least inhabited section" of the Nile Valley. "Official estimates put the population of Egyptian Nubia due to be resettled at only 52,000; and that of the part of Sudanese Nubia also to be inundated at 40,000, including the 12,000 of Wadi Halfa." It is planned to provide for Egyptian Nubians in a newly irrigated area suitable for raising sugar-cane at Komombo and "in two oases which it may be possible to create, when the water has found its new level, near Kalabsha and Abu Simbel." Even in the Egyptian Sudan, however, there must be an interim during which the inhabitants of the flooded areas will become, in the modern, dreadfully euphemistic phrase, "displaced persons." As for Sudanese Nubia, there "a whole town is to disappear. From afar Wadi-Halfa may not seem a great center of civilisation. But it strikes you differently when you have traveled all the way from the first cataract and penetrated a little way beyond the second. Its newly paved main street that will now never need repair, the abandonment by the district commissioner of his effort to get the town council to post up the street names, the carefully tended flower-beds of the railway station, the sight of boys running to catch the school bus in an outlying suburb, all in different ways suggest efforts promising rapid fruit, but which must now be started all over again somewhere else."

If space permitted, we would like to reprint both of these Guardian articles for the benefit of such of our members as have not easy access to them. An item of great archeological interest in the second of the two articles is that Philae, now visible only for a few weeks in the late summer, is the one site in Nubia which will be more easily preserved after the building of the High Dam. It is planned to restore to it its setting of verdure, which lent so greatly to its charm in the eyes of the early travelers, who saw it before it was inundated by the reservoir created by the present dam at Aswan.

Letter from Nicholas B. Millet

Chicago House, Luxor
February 28, 1960

Dear Members:

Luxor is now enjoying the noisy height of its tourist season. The hotel lobbies and dining-rooms are alive every evening with throngs of people speaking every language, including Swedish and Japanese, and dressed on the whole far more picturesquely than the good citizens of the town. Even the most gloriously garbed dragoman fades into insignificance beside some of the respectable American businessmen and German schoolteachers. During the day, the hotels are deserted and somnolent; the guests have departed for Karnak, the Luxor temple, or the glories of the West Bank. The lobby of the Winter Palace is desolate, except for a sleepy clerk or two, an occasional irreverent fly, or an exhausted septuagenarian recovering from the exertions of the previous day. At five o'clock, however, peace is over, and the weary traveler, returning from the awe-inspiring austerity of the Valley of the Kings or the silent terraces of Der el-Bahri, can see from afar an ominous cloud of kites, eagles, and vultures, circling intently over the town. Across the mind of the timorous voyager flash visions of plague, massacre, and death. But not so. Luxor has come to life again; tea is being served on the verandah of the Winter Palace, and all that the birds of prey have on their minds is the faint hope of a ham sandwich.

What never ceases to amaze me is the fact that this horde of visitors is virtually unnoticeable when it is dispersed among the monuments of Thebes. There is so much to see here that there is rarely any considerable crowd in any one temple, and the footsore groups who struggle through the vast cemeteries of the West Bank are lost in immensity. One is hardly ever oppressed by the presence of other people, even in the popular Temple of Karnak, whose roofless grandeur swallows up the most obstreperous groups of school-children and reduces the lonely visitor to the scale of one of the rock-lizards that scuttle quietly across the sun-lit reliefs.

I arrived in Luxor much later than I had hoped and so have been here only about a week. I expect to stay another week and then to proceed up-river as far as Wadi Halfa, going from there to visit the Middle Kingdom forts of Semna and Kumma and Dr. Emery's new fortress at Buhen. At the moment, Jim Knudstad, the Oriental Institute's architect here at Chicago House, and I are planning a short trip to the Oasis of Khargeh, where we want to spend a few days looking at the Ptolemaic and Roman temples. We haven't yet had word whether we will be granted permission to go, for the deserts on both sides of the Nile are military areas, and travel in them is restricted by the Ministry of Defense.

Jim Knudstad has been working on the plans of the tomb of Kheruef, which has been cleared during the past two seasons through a joint effort of the Oriental Institute and the Department of Antiquities. I went with him the other day for my first look at this famous tomb, which was cut for the steward of Queen Tiy, the wife of Amenhotep III. Though most of the work on the tomb was done during the reign of Amenhotep III, the decoration of the entrance seems to have been completed in the early years of Amenhotep IV, before he changed his name to Akhnaten and moved to Tell el-Amarna. Kheruef's tomb

is a very large one, but only a few of the fine reliefs were finished before he died. The great underground columned hall, now fallen in, was never decorated at all in his time; its walls show only a few painted figures and inscriptions of some Ramesside scribes, who later had small graves cut for themselves in its floor. Indeed, the entire vast tomb-complex of Kheruef was used in subsequent periods as a cemetery, and numerous tombs lead from the main court into the rock surrounding it. Many of these tombs, which range in date from Ramesside times down to the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, are decorated with painted reliefs, but they cannot rival the beautiful reliefs of Kheruef himself. The Oriental Institute is planning to publish the tomb in full as soon as possible.

Miss Elizabeth Thomas, who is working under the auspices of the Center, is also here at Chicago House. It will be remembered by readers of the Newsletters that she is carrying out investigations of the royal tombs on the West Bank. Her aim is to ascribe to their rightful owners certain unidentified tombs, which contain no helpful decorations or inscriptions from which their date might be conjectured. She thus has to proceed on a basis of tomb-types, and with this end in view has been examining as many tombs of kings and queens as she has been able to get into, in order to compare the types. Some of these tombs are normally inaccessible: because of their remoteness and the consequent difficulty of guarding them, the entrance pits, behind which lie locked iron gates, are filled with rock and rubble. The other day, Miss Thomas succeeded in getting permission to enter two tombs in the Wadi el-Ain, which lies behind and to the west of the Valley of the Kings, and is reached by a track leading off from the main road to that valley. Because she needed some help in taking her measurements and because these tombs are so rarely open to visitors, Jim Knudstad and I accompanied her in the car so generously put at her disposal by the Oriental Institute expedition. A few minutes' drive from the road leading to the Valley of the Kings brought us to the center of the remote ravine where Amenhotep III and King Ai, the successor of Tutankhamun, were buried. We found ourselves on the floor of an enormous, steep-sided amphitheater in the rock, the western wall of which was baking in brilliant sunshine, while the east face (for it was early in the morning) still lay in cold shadow. A gang of men from the Department of Antiquities was already at work removing rocks from the entrance to the tomb of Amenhotep III; within an hour it was clear, and the iron gate swung open. After so much preparation, I had something of the feeling one must have upon entering a hitherto undisturbed tomb. It was, in fact, the first time I had entered a tomb of such size that had not been "modernized," and I had once more that "nineteenth century" feeling that sometimes comes over one in Egypt. While most of the popular tombs in the Valley of the Kings have been provided with electric lighting and steel stairs, this one is still navigable only with the aid of a flashlight and (at one point) a rope-ladder. At the foot of a descending passageway lies a great shaft (probably intended to trap any water that might enter the tomb), from the bottom of which leads a small chamber, and we clambered down to investigate and measure it. Most of the decoration of the tomb had never been carried out (the king seems indeed to have died before the cutting of the chambers was finished), and many of the inscriptions lack the final touches. What was completed is now, however, in a sad state, with the gloriously painted plaster fallen from much of the wall-area.

During my few days here, we made a trip to Edfu to see the temple, one of the best preserved in all Egypt. On the way, we stopped off and spent a half-hour inspecting the mysterious pyramid of El-Kula. This strange

monument, which rises from a bare rock platform to the right of the modern Esna-Edfu road, has long been known, but has never ceased to be a puzzle to Egyptologists. The only recent attempt to deliver it of its secret has only added to the confusion. A Belgian expedition that excavated the area found absolutely nothing: no entrance, no chambers, no inscriptions, not a single clue to shed light on the purpose of the builders or the date of construction. In appearance, it certainly resembles a pyramid more than anything else. It is made of limestone, which is not a local material, is 17 meters square and about ten meters high, and in its present state looks very much like a diminutive step-pyramid. But it is far to the south of the great pyramids of the Memphite region, and if it is, like them, a royal monument, it is hard to imagine why a king of Egypt would have thought of building it in such a remote and provincial location.

On the way back from Edfu we stopped at Hierakonpolis, the site of the prehistoric capital of Upper Egypt, and at the Greco-Roman temple of Esna, where Dr. Serge Sauneron of the French Institute is engaged in copying the inscriptions.

The main topic of archaeological conversation is of course the approach of the inauguration of the Nubian Salvage Program. Last week a crowd of foreign correspondents and assorted diplomats was invited by the Government to visit the sites of Egyptian Nubia, and now another group, this time of technical experts, is going up-river to examine the temples in the area to be flooded and to make more detailed plans for the removal of those that can be moved. The Government has announced that next August the level of the reservoir above the Aswan Barrage will be lowered ten meters or so, in order that the actual dismantling of some of the temples can begin.

Professor Abu Bakr, of Cairo University, who is (as has been mentioned above), digging at Aniba, reports that he has discovered a large community burial of late times, in which several hundred persons had been interred without mummification. The strange contortions of many of the bodies suggest that some ancient tragedy such as an epidemic may have made necessary a hasty mass-burial.

Dr. Jozef Janssen, well remembered by many of our members, has just arrived in Luxor on his way home to the Netherlands from his last season of work at the temple of Amenhotep III at Soleb in the Sudan. Dr. Robichon, the director of the expedition, will continue work at the site for another season.

Finally, I have to report that Dr. Labib Habachi has resigned from the Department of Antiquities, news that will be a great blow to his many friends and colleagues. The direction of the Department is now in the hands of Dr. Anwar Shukri.

Nicholas B. Millet

From Dr. George T. Scanlon, Director in Cairo

Cairo, 15 March 1960

Dear Members:

The past six weeks have been a period of unfolding of spirit to the rays of a beneficent sun! Tourists are swarming in to enjoy its warmth (and of course to make a Grand Tour of the monuments) and the local population is

more expansive than ever. People in general seem to want to get out and do things, with the result that one finds them less and less in their offices or at home; many are "up river" or at Siwa or in Damascus or "on missions abroad." Artists are showing, exhibits of all sorts are abounding, flowers blooming, officials approving. Annoyance over delay, disappointment over a quest ungained -- and a victim of both have I been of late -- disappear under the daily ineluctable gold. Hope is renewed, and old projects once more set afoot seem again possible of fulfillment. To me, now that I am experiencing the return of Spring to the East for the fourth time in eight years, truth is patent in the apothegm of a particularly corrupt Mediterranean mayor, with whom I clashed while in naval service: "The sun redeems everything."

Since I last wrote, I have completed the cycle of eight tours to the Muslim monuments of Cairo. The turn-out was most encouraging, growing each week, until it reached a peak of forty-three, including a six-months-old babe in a pram -- exactly the age, I think, to begin one's cultural acclimating. The average attendance for the series was about thirty; at least twenty persons showed up for all eight of the tours. However the Center may profit, it is very heartening to find the American community in Cairo awakening to the glories of the Islamic past of this ancient land. The personal satisfaction gained from the tours has been not unlike that gained from teaching -- the arousing of a response to one's own passion and interest.

On one of the tours, we visited the famous Citadel of Cairo, which I discussed in an earlier Newsletter. Though I was unable to get the group into the important Northern Enclosure, I had them walk around the exterior periphery in order to grasp something of its size, strength, and architectural variety. The following Sunday, we visited the Islamic Museum, where the objects are excellently installed. Here, we saw the minor arts in which Muslim craftsmen excelled: stone- and stucco-decoration, woodwork, incomparable glass and metalwork. Here, too, the group could gain an idea of the fineness of two great achievements of Muslim art, ceramics, and the art of the book -- binding, calligraphy, and miniature painting. Nor did we neglect the exquisite Fatimid textiles, the quality of which still astounds one after some nine hundred years. The group was most grateful to the Director, Dr. Mustafa, who with great kindness facilitated our visit.

We next visited two examples of Bahri Mamluk architecture -- the early mosque of Sultan Baybars, called the Zahiriyah, with its imposing monumental entrances and fine external ornamentation; and the grandest of all the Mamluk mosques, that of Sultan Hasan at the foot of the Citadel, the supreme example of the cruciform madrasah. It is not too much to say that all previous local architecture led to it and that all subsequent styles and variations flowed from it. No more the lateral flow and comforting expanse of Ibn Tulun, rather a soaring upward and a concision of space.

On the final Sunday of our cycle we went to the cemetery of the Mamluk Sultans to see three examples from the Circassian, or Burji, period: first, the mausoleum-khanqah (monastery) of Barquq, built by his son Faraj, with a symmetry of two -- two minarets, two tomb-domes, two sabils (fountains), two kuttabs, or lecture-rooms, with projecting carved wooden shades, etc.; second, the mosque-mausoleum-khanqah of Sultan Inal, part built when he was merely a high amir at the Sultan's court, the rest added when he rose to eminence; and, finally, the chef d'oeuvre of the period, the tomb-mosque of Sultan Qa'it Bay, with its finely wrought and balanced façade, which combines

the five chief elements of a Mamluk tomb-mosque -- soaring entrance, dome, minaret (and this is the finest in Cairo), sabil, and kuttab. Its interior is no less fine - a counterpoint of marble and glass, wood and stone, a variety of modes of ablaq, (a mosaic of stones, generally marble) in different colors, red, black, white, off-yellow.

Since the Ottomans built nothing in Cairo to compare with the earlier Muslim monuments, our tours ended with the Mamluks. What we had seen was truly characteristic of Egypt, while Ottoman architecture was something transplanted. Much of it, however, is fine and perhaps should be included in the tours offered to members during the coming season.

Cairo continues to attract visitors whose activities should prove of interest to members of the Center. Dr. Rudolf Mack of Princeton University has recently been here for a week's consultation with Egyptian Islamic scholars. Dr. Mack is bibliographer to the Princeton Department of Oriental Studies, an eminent Semitist and Arabist, presently cataloguing the Yahudah Collection of Arabic Manuscripts. This collection, numbering more than eight thousand items, when combined with the Garrett Collection (already catalogued), will make Princeton the possessor of the largest collection of Arabic manuscripts in the Western world. A number of these manuscripts may be unique, and Dr. Mack is travelling through the Middle East to check on uncatalogued and unpublished material to find out if indeed they are. His catalogue will be of no common importance, for manuscripts are the very life-blood of Islamic scholarship; by them, we increase or amend our knowledge of a society whose continuum is evident to anyone who lives, even for a short time, in the Muslim East. Incidentally, the manuscript on which my own dissertation was based and on which I am still working here in Cairo, comes from the Yahudah Collection and was signalled to me by Dr. Mack.

Mr. Charles Thomas, a member of the Center, has established residence in Cairo to pursue his studies in Arabic language and literature. Mr. Thomas received his bachelor's degree from Princeton and has done graduate work at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard.

Professor and Mrs. Sterling Dow, now visiting in Upper Egypt, have been in Cairo for a fortnight. Professor Dow is, as is well known to readers of the Newsletters, a very active Trustee of the Center. It was very gratifying to have him here so that he might learn at first hand about our work for the Center and gain some insight into the local situation -- its possibilities, its vagaries, and its ultimate importance. He and Mrs. Dow proved wonderful additions to the social and intellectual scene.

Another member of the Center, Mr. John Nicholas Brown, has passed through Cairo enroute for Luxor and Aswan. On his return, I hope to show him some of the Islamic monuments of Cairo. I have already performed that service for Mr. and Mrs. Horace Mayer, whom I took on a tour of the city walls of Cairo, and I will be in touch with them again when they return from Upper Egypt.

I have been doing what I can to help visiting members of the Archaeological Institute of America, although the number has become rather formidable. With Mr. Millet at present in Luxor, it is not always possible to satisfy all requests, especially concerning Egyptological matters, in Cairo. He is, of course, helping members of the Center and the Institute who wish to visit the

Theban monuments. We are both glad of the increasing interest in the Center shown by visiting Americans and are glad to comply with requests for advice and guidance so far as we are able.

The United Arab Republic has been holding an extensive and prolonged industrial exhibition here in Cairo. Though as a rule such shows do not delight me, I find this one of particular significance, as it must be to anyone whose interests lie in the Middle East. It is amazing to see what a variety of things are now being manufactured in Egypt. It is true that most of the raw materials are imported and that the quality of the finished products is not up to the Western products formerly found on the local market, but the exhibition illustrates most strikingly how industrialized the nation has become in the past decade. Egypt now has a class of entrepreneurs. They may not yet be able to rival the former foreign managers of Egypt's life and economy, but they are on the scene, self-created and self-directed, and not very likely to permit direction to fall into alien hands. Egypt now wants loans, not investments, no matter how minimal the latter may be. The German financial wizard, Dr. Erhard, was told exactly this on his much-heralded state visit -- much to his chagrin, for the Germans, unlike the Americans since World War II, are philanthropists who expect a return on their economic charity. A very large group of potential American investors were told exactly the same thing. To make the matter crystal clear, the Government has nationalized the two largest banks, so as to corral them into its economic scheme. All this seems too stringent to many local persons, visitors and citizens alike, but for a country dedicated to doubling its income in ten years, any outflow of capital is anathema. The exhibition shows what has been accomplished, and much of it is surprising and good. It seems to indicate that it is we of the West, perhaps, who must adjust by finding new way to help old and changing societies.

On the cultural side, Cairo has had a rash of painting exhibitions. The abstractionists have penetrated Egypt; we have had examples of both the Parisian and American types, exciting and different, brutally personal, eventually decorative. A more traditional painter, Miss Margo Veillon, a Swiss who has lived her entire life in Egypt, has shown, in a series of paintings of village women, dancing horses, oases, wedding feasts, and other scenes of domestic life, the enduring Egypt that continues to exist beside, beneath, and beyond monuments and governments and the chance visits of conquerors and tourists.

For the rest, a Berlin chamber orchestra has played Bach and Handel and Mozart and Tartini for us, so flawlessly that one longed for the eighteenth-century violinist who dropped his bow to adjust his wig. Moscow's Puppet Theater is now with us, and the Italians are making a valiant effort to provide opera for us -- alas, with a sacrifice of tone and quality! A local folklore society has brought Egyptian dancing to the threshold of art, eschewing abandon for uncluttered choreography. Later this month, the United States will sponsor a nuclear energy exhibition.

The sun redeems everything!

George T. Scanlon

Publications by Members of the Center

Bothmer, Bernard V., "Block Statues of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom. I: Ipepy's Funerary Monument," in The Brooklyn Museum Bulletin, XX, no. 4, Fall 1959, p. 11-26, illus.

This article, the first of a series on Middle Kingdom block statues, takes as text a quartzite figurine inserted into a limestone table of offerings, which has recently been acquired by The Brooklyn Museum. The man Ipepy, represented by the figurine, is shown in a squatting posture, sitting on his heels with his knees raised to his chin and his arms crossed over them -- a posture familiar to anyone who knows the Middle East today, but already habitual to the earliest dwellers in the Nile Valley. It became increasingly popular in sculptures of private persons from the Middle Kingdom down to the Late Period. In his readable and extremely well-documented study, Mr. Bothmer traces the beginning of the evolution of this familiar type and discusses, as well, the statuette that serves as a point of departure for the series. Mr. Bothmer, now Associate Curator of Ancient Art at The Brooklyn Museum, will be remembered by members of the Center for his lively contributions to the Newsletters during the two years of his service as Director in Cairo.

Kantor, Helene J., "Ivory Carving in the Mycenaean Period," in Archaeology, 13, no. 1, Spring, 1960, p. 14-25, illus.

Dr. Kantor, a member of the Center since 1950, is Associate Professor of Archaeology at the University of Chicago. She has written much on the comparative art and archaeology of the ancient Near East, and the present article touches at many points on the relationship between Egypt and the Mycenaean world. Indeed, the entire Spring number of Archaeology, exclusively devoted to the early civilization of Greece and its contributions to and from the Mediterranean world, should prove of interest to anyone concerned with Egyptian foreign relations, especially in the New Kingdom.

Thomas, Elizabeth, "Ramesses III: notes and queries," in Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, 45, 1959, p. 101-102.

Miss Thomas is at present working under the auspices of the Center on the more obscure royal tombs in the Theban necropolis, many of them uninscribed but perhaps in some cases assignable, through plan or details, to a given reign. Here, she speculates on the possibility that certain tombs may have been the burial places of members of the family of Ramesses III.

Vermeule, Cornelius C., "Greek, Etruscan and Roman Bronzes Acquired by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston," in The Classical Journal, 55, no. 5, February, 1960, p. 193-204, illus.

Among the interesting small bronzes presented in this article are two of Egyptian origin, one a Harpocrates of more than routine quality and the other an exceptionally fine statuette of a negro boy, which was probably made in Alexandria, though it was found in the eighteenth century at Chalon-sur Saône, where it formed part of a hoard of antique bronzes.

-----, "Greek & Roman Portraits, 470 B. C. - A. D. 500.
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 1959, plates.

The majority of the seventy-odd portraits illustrated in this very handsome brochure are in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and many among them originated in Egypt. The introduction (unsigned) by Cornelius Vermeule, is an excellent summary of portraiture in the Greek and Roman world, when artists "first exploited the full potentials of the human face as a work in art." It includes a brief account of the media employed for portraiture in antiquity.

Notes on Activities of Members

Members of the Center were well represented at the meeting of the American Oriental Society held at Yale University, March 29-31. Among those who presented papers were the following:

Walter Federn: "Three Notes on 'The Admonitions of An Egyptian Sage. '"

Henry G. Fischer: "Three Old Kingdom Palimpsests in the Louvre. "

Oleg Grabar: "The Earliest Islamic Mausoleums. "

George C. Miles: "On the Varieties and Accuracy of 8th Century Arabic Glass Coin Weights. "

Richard A. Parker: "Irrational Square Roots in Egyptian Mathematics. "

A. R. Schulman: "A Preliminary Survey of the Stelae from the 1915-1923 Excavations of the (Pennsylvania) University Museum at Memphis. "

E. L. B. Terrace: "New Finds from Northwest Persia. "

William Stevenson Smith, Executive Vice-President of the Center, represented Egypt at a symposium on "Interconnections between Oriental Civilizations. "

In Memorium

His colleagues will learn with regret of the death in Cairo, early in February, of Vladimir Vikentiev, the eminent Russian Egyptologist.

SUPPLEMENT TO NEWSLETTER NUMBER THIRTY-EIGHT

Letter from Professor Sterling Dow

Athens, Greece
1 April 1960

Dear Members:

The half-planned sabbatical year of a Classical professor in need of a restful change is not likely to produce glowing new intelligence about Egypt; nor are readers of the Newsletter likely to feel elated if they read such truisms as that Egypt is still beguilingly beautiful, and that life in the presence of its remarkable monuments has developed a certain number of genial and fascinating minds, some of them centered, so to speak, in the Center. Enough about the two Dows therefore, to say that, thanks largely to the Center, and for one memorable week thanks to the American College at Assiut, we had exceptional opportunities in Egypt. It would be our fault if after so much good travel and good talk, we could find nothing to say of general interest.

Contemporary Egypt

There need not be the slightest doubt that Egypt is hospitable to tourists. The figures are proof. "Tourism" increased 50% in 1959 over 1958. Details are interesting, e. g. among those who stayed 15 days or more, Saudi-Arabians were most numerous; among non-Arabs, Greeks. There has been a further substantial increase in 1960, enough at times to fill hotels, trains, and planes. Among the transients, many were only too recognizably Americans -- reminders alas that charity ought to begin at home. Much that Egyptians have many Americans lack.

Undoubtedly a new Egypt is coming into being. There is intense activity. As in Rome, Athens, and elsewhere, great numbers of new apartment houses have been and are being built. The activity is governmental as well as private. Egyptians told us that, whereas formerly large government projects were mentioned in the papers one day, only to be forgotten the next, now projects are mentioned one day and actually begun the next. When we arrived (18 Feb.), there was an empty plot between the new Hilton and the still newer United Arab Republic Building, itself dedicated while we were there. In the empty plot, by the time we left, was a fancy atomic exhibition structure, its roof suspended on wires from a mast, and ready to receive a blue-glowing nuclear mass of some sort (actually from the USA). There need be no doubt that the Egyptian Museum in Cairo itself will migrate to Heliopolis: still another new building is planned (the land is acquired), so that the Greco-Roman Museum in Alexandria can exhibit not just the 26,000 objects now on display, but many of the 40,000 additional objects now in the store-rooms.

There is a new spirit in Egypt as a nation. The focus of this spirit is more personal than it could be with us. Nasser has made himself known not merely as an inspiration for nationalism in foreign policy (that aspect is not our concern here), and for intense physical activity, but also for a general realization that in ruling herself at last, Egypt has assumed

responsibilities personal to every Egyptian. It is known, for instance, that Nasser opposes, and that all Egyptians ought to oppose, corruption and veniality and everything that in any way reduces free Egypt. In Assiut, visiting the "Roman" baths, President McClanahan (of Assiut College) and I were surrounded at the entrance by a small crowd calling out for baksheesh. It was not a museum, and we were present as friends. The President suggested to the group that in Nasser's Egypt this calling for baksheesh was no longer in place. The response was instantaneous. Everyone shouted agreement. Not a word more was said about money. The ancient Egyptian courtesy and hospitality prevailed. When this can happen, Nasser has already done more for Egypt than any regime in centuries.

But I imagine no one realizes better than Nasser himself that universal changes are not to be expected overnight. Like many seats of ancient culture and gentility -- Spain for example -- Egypt is only slowly awakening to the realization that not merely technology, which they are beginning to acquire, but also intellectual achievement of every kind needs to be fostered. Whether we like it or not, in the modern competitive state, trained intellects are increasingly at a premium in every sphere. Non-political careers in every line, from medicine to archaeology, must have solid support. This is the challenge of the future.

The American Research Center

It will be recalled that the Center had its origin more than ten years ago, when the War was over and a new future had to be faced. Such as it was, my own part in the War had shown how great is the service, especially in relation to other countries, of purely cultural organizations. France, for instance, has maintained in Cairo for many decades an Institute of Archaeology, housed in magnificence, and with a record of published volumes so extensive as to fill a lengthy catalogue (new edition forthcoming, 1960). Not without reason is the language of cultivated politeness in Egypt still French.

Just after the War, it seemed that there were opportunities, and needs, for American archaeological schools, particularly in China, in Turkey, and not least in Egypt. The Archaeological Institute of America, of which I happened to have been elected president, in the past had established such schools in Athens, Rome, Jerusalem and Damascus, and in Arizona; but the creation of new ones was not easy. China soon fell to the Communists, and support has never been found to emulate our British cousins in establishing a new institute in Turkey. But Egypt was promising. It was natural to turn to Mr. Edward Waldo Forbes, the dean of all friends of Egyptian studies; and -- seeking especially both to avoid excessive local representation, and to enlist the support of the largest group of professional Egyptologists in America -- to Prof. John A. Wilson, then Dean of the Oriental Institute in Chicago. Prof. Wilson came to visit us in Cambridge, and together we drafted the constitution; as Mr. Forbes' deputy I presided over a distinguished gathering in the Club of Odd Volumes; Prof. Wilson sent out announcements; finally incorporation took place under the scrupulous guidance of Mr. Forbes' lawyer, the incorporators being duly gathered in a body, and lunching in the Tavern Club, while messengers came and went to the State House. Thus the American Research Center came into being. That was in 1950.

Barring a few articles that touch on Greco-Roman Egypt, my own studies have been outside Egypt; and by 1960 I was eager to see what the still-very-youthful Center is, and can be, in Egypt. After much earnest inquiry, I can report as follows:

(1) The Center is now, and every year without exception has been, fortunate in the scholarly and personal qualities of its representatives in Egypt. There has been no compromise with scholarly excellence.

(2) It is particularly fortunate that its present head not only knows, likes, and understands many phases of contemporary Egypt, but most of all that his own studies are Islamic.

(3) In the future, Islamic studies should always have a part in the Center, both in the USA and in Cairo. The recent effort of the officers of the Center to obtain support for the Predynastic, Greco-Roman, Coptic, and Islamic phases is greatly to be commended. These studies can strengthen each other: the French Institute is an example.

(4) The series of public visits to sites, with lectures, conducted by both Dr. Scanlon and Mr. Millet, eight by each, are an unqualified success. This is because the treatment of the subject by the lecturers is not only enthusiastic but also scholarly and thorough. The quality is obvious and is appreciated. The series should be maintained in full strength: the audiences become really trained, and the instructors themselves benefit, as all of us teachers do, by intimate renewed contact with the great monuments.

(5) If the Center has been rich in people, the fact must be admitted that it is poor in all other ways. It needs at least one actual room of its own in Cairo. It needs a man who can see to all those administrative tasks which eat into a Director's time: leg-work and paper-work, not lectures, are the menace. It needs official recognition. It desperately needs funds.

(6) Overshadowing all else at present is the mighty effort to rescue the archaeological materials due to be submerged by the High Dam. There has never (I believe) been a concerted international effort on behalf of archaeology like this one. The Center ought to be prominent in this good cause, both in Egypt and in the USA. It is the hour for action.

THE ASSIUT COLLEGE MUSEUM in the Taggart Library

The greatest archaeological distinction of Assiut College is in papyri. To President J.R. Alexander were brought, in late 1889, the most important and famous lot of papyri ever discovered, and he obtained them for the world of learning. They included Aristotle's Constitution of Athens, otherwise known only in brief quotations; the curious Mimes of

Herondas, unknown since Antiquity but most of them perfectly preserved in the Assiut papyri; and a half-dozen other writings of value -- Homer, Hypereides, Demosthenes, et al. On these I shall have written elsewhere (Martin Classical Lectures). The central Case (Y) of the Museum is now reserved for the photographic fascimile of the Aristotle; for the inscription of Sarapous and the mask of his wife, in whose (joint) grave the papyri are said to have been found (but this needs more study); and for a selection from among the hundreds of small fragments of papyri, which Alexander subsequently collected.

But although Assiut College can claim a supreme distinction in papyrology, its Museum has much to offer in addition to trophies of this achievement. J. R. Alexander went on to collect objects from all four of the main periods of Egyptian history. Over 600 objects have been inventoried. It may be useful to supplement the brief entry in the Guide Bleu (ed. 1956, p. 259) by mentioning some of the notable objects, with the comment that the Museum is perhaps all the better for teaching purposes (and safer too) because no one object is of so great value and fame as to put the rest in the shade.

Predynastic and Dynastic. Two shelves of Predynastic vases, from Nagadeh, Period II (given by F. Petrie), have representations of ships with two sails and many oars each. Petrie's Rifeh vases (NK), very numerous, will all be set out. There is a First Intermediate Period wooden sarcophagus and its (one-legged) mummy; and another sarcophagus and mummy, also well preserved, of Dyn XXVI. Mummies of animals filled four cases (half these are now stored): dogs (and wolves ?), cats, jackals; a crocodile head; ibises, "hawks" (?), many fish. No. 211 is a Dyn XIX stele with figures of deities and others, and inscribed at length, to be published by H. Wild. There are three complete (inscribed) ostraka, probably not published, and seven painted stelae.

Greco-Roman: In addition to the papyri, there are some figurines (two of Harpocrates are notable), and a large number of coins, mostly bronze. All the coins are now united in Case M, but they have only begun to be ordered. The outstanding piece is a Fayum mummy portrait of a young woman, smaller in scale than most, and classically quiet in tone -- soft-eyed, not staring. There is also a small Greco-Roman painted stele with a cult scene probably worth attention.

Coptic: Fabrics, now all under glass (four frames); three funerary inscriptions (one on lead), well preserved and said not to be published; some pages of illuminated MS. paper codices; and most striking, but yet to be dated with certainty, whether before or after A.D. 300, the fine white-and-black mask of Mrs. Sarapous.

Muslim: Coins dated by Dr. Skellie; a few nice tiles and lamps; and a framed piece of fabric said to be from the covering of the Kaaba itself. A Hebrew parchment roll of the Book of Esther is late (Seventeenth Century) but is handsomely written, complete, and in perfect condition: with some examples of printed books added, it enables the Museum to illustrate the history of the book, from Pharaonic times to the present.

The Museum has been made into a teaching museum, with labels to give in brief form the history of Egypt; the history of the book; the

recovery of the Aristotle papyrus. Arabic translations of all labels will be provided. H. Wild's excellent Catalogue (ca. 1950) will be retyped in parts to allow for changes -- each case now contains objects of only one period. A second Museum room for study and storage, has been opened.

Assiut and its neighborhood have many other intellectual distinctions. Plotinus himself is said by some to have been born there, and it was in the Subakhminic dialect of Assiut that the Valentinian Gospel of Truth was translated (from the Greek). In four more years the American College will celebrate its centennial, and an enormous Egyptian new University, with an excellent President (Hussein), is under construction nearby.

Various Scholarly Notes

For specialists I can report as follows.

Pharaonic. The study of surviving ancient bows, initiated some years ago by F. E. Brown of Yale (article in Museum Kondakovianum) has been taken up, at my suggestion, by W. E. McLeod (article AJA 1958. 397). The most important group of composite bows is Tut-ankh-amun's varied lot in the Egyptian Museum (besides those exhibited, there are ten more in storage). Use of Carter's notes has recently been granted to McLeod, and I was able to answer one routine question. Many bows in the Metropolitan and Brooklyn Museums will also need attention. An inclusive bibliography of archery is well along; items likely to be missed will be welcomed by McLeod (University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B. C.), who now has the items in K. A. C. Creswell's bibliography of Arabic works on warfare.

Greco-Roman. One of the two finders of the Aristotle and other papyri which were brought to J. R. Alexander was a former student at Assiut College. This fact gave a meager hope that his name might still be ascertained. With the generous and energetic help of President McClanahan, I made diligent inquiry at Assiut and at Meir, but without success: there was some reason in 1889 for not telling, and I doubt if more than a very few persons ever knew. If we shall never know who found the Aristotle papyrus, or exactly where, at least there is satisfaction in having made a full investigation on the spot.

It is pleasant to be able to report, however, that one of the minor mysteries surrounding the great Alexander acquisition has been virtually solved. After 1889, and continuing until recently, one lot after another of small fragments of papyri came from Alexander. There were some six such lots in all, and each caused a flurry of excitement. I found in the Assiut Museum a mass greater than all the other lots of small fragments added together. This proves that Alexander, oddly, acquired, doubtless by gift, dozens of small pieces which the dealers could not sell because the bits were too small, plus others, probably, brought in as gifts. Any connection of any of them with the great papyri of 1889 is of course doubtful, but efforts will be made to exhaust the reasonable possibilities. In a week at Assiut I was able to make some progress in preparing the collection for further work.

The study of a type of votive offering, the Foot of Sarapis, initiated by T. Reinach, and carried on by Frieda S. Upson and myself (article in Hesperia 1944. 58) will be resumed by Catherine Fisher, now at Oxford. She was substantially aided by discoveries made by Helen Wall-Jacquet of the Center. In Alexandria I was able to add some notes.

Coptic. In addition to the two inscriptions in the Assiut College Museum (supra), there is a lengthy Coptic inscription, in good condition, preserved in the floor under the altar in the Church of Mir Kainos el Alazib in Meir. I have not ascertained whether it is published.

K. Grobel's translation, with commentary, of the Valentinian Gospel of Truth, just out (New York - Nashville 1960), is the first to appear in English of the 49 Gnostic works which make up the most tremendous papyrological discovery of recent date (1945), viz. the papyri, as they are now called, of Khenoboskion.

Islamic. The architectural and other researches of K. A. C. Creswell are already famous, and must impress anyone who has the good fortune to see them at first hand; there will soon be extensive new publications. R. Mach, collecting Arabic books and manuscripts for Princeton, was aided by the Center, but gave more in return: he has contributed, for instance, a valuable Arabic section to the forthcoming History of Alphabetization by L. W. Daly and the undersigned.

An examination, cursory to be sure and inadequate, of the fort of Kai't Bey at Alexandria, built on the site of the Pharos at Alexandria, suggests that the site might well be re-studied with the problems of the Pharos in mind.

Postscript.

After seeing the monuments of Pharaonic and Islamic Egypt, preserved to lofty heights, it was a strange experience to return to a Classical site - the area of the great Sarapeion at Alexandria ("Pompey's Pillar") - consisting mostly, apart from the Pillar (which after all is very nearly Byzantine), of trenches cut for foundations: hardly one block left on another! Few if any Classical archaeologists would give up their studies for the riches of Pharaonic Egypt, but standing near the Pillar, one could only reflect that in contrast to Pharaonic and Islamic Archaeology, much of the Classical is holes in the ground. Happily the gloom can be quickly dissipated by a visit to the Museum. The Greco-Roman Museum represents its period and country as do few museums in the world. It is greatly to be hoped that with increased support the Center can have a share in studying the wealth of material.

Sterling Dow

There has just arrived from Professor Sterling Dow of Harvard University, a founder and trustee of the Center, who is at present on sabbatical leave in the Mediterranean, an important report on his recent visit to Egypt, which is printed as a supplement to this Newsletter. This report includes not only a great classical scholar's reactions to the archaeological wealth of Egypt, but lively comment on conditions at the present day and on the part the Center is playing and could play in the intellectual life of the country. We are sure that our members will find it of absorbing interest.